



KEITH RIPP

47TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

To: Assembly Committee on Fish and Wildlife
From: Representative Keith Ripp
Date: February 17, 2010
Subject: AB 714

Representative Keith Ripp Testimony on AB 714

Good afternoon committee members. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today in favor of Assembly Bill 714. This bill is based on federal legislation that was co-sponsored by Wisconsin Senator Russ Feingold and would allow hunters who donate qualified wild game to anti-hunger programs and deduct the processing fees from their state taxes. This bill would also exempt income that processors receive to process meat for charitable programs.

Donating deer has a long history in Wisconsin. Long before any organized program was established, hunters have been food providers for families in need. The first official Wisconsin Deer Donation program started taking donations during the 2000 deer hunting season. During the first 9 years of the statewide program, over 69,700 deer have been donated. Those deer have provided over 3.1 million pounds of ground venison for thousands of needy families served through over 700 food pantries in our state.

The DNR has recently released the final count of donated deer for 2009, 3,914 deer were donated which resulted in about 176,000 pounds of ground venison for food pantries. That's about half the amount donated in 2008 which shows how the need for deer donation is greater now than ever. During these difficult times more families have been turning to food pantries and donation programs to supplement what little they have. This increase in demand is putting increased pressure on pantries to fill this need. I believe with this bill we can encourage more hunters to donate and more processors to participate in these programs that help Wisconsin families in the most need.